



EXTRAMURAL PREVENTION RESEARCH PROGRAM

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

- Many of our nation's leading causes of premature death, disease, disability, and injury—including cancer, heart disease, asthma, suicide, and motor vehicle crashes—are preventable. These conditions are strongly affected by behavior, lifestyle, and the environment.
- Much is known about healthful behaviors; however, far less is understood about how best to assist individuals and communities to establish healthful behaviors and environments.
- Practitioners, policy makers, and communities often question whether research results and guidelines developed in other locales, using populations different from their own, are appropriate and affordable for their community.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC is committed to funding high quality public health research that makes the transition from basic research to practice. All research is initiated and proposed by researchers working in conjunction with communities to address local priority health concerns. All research projects also undergo peer review by expert researchers external to CDC to identify the highest quality proposals.

Through the first round of grants in 1999, CDC funded over 50 projects on topics such as asthma, traumatic brain injury, workplace safety, health disparities, heart disease, and violence. In 2002, 25 more grants were funded from over 300 applications. The participatory approach requires the researchers to engage practitioners, policy makers, and others in the community in defining the research questions of most importance to their community, and in interpreting and applying the study findings in their own community.

Example of program in action: The University of Pennsylvania is evaluating the effects of a school-based nutrition policy initiative on prevalence, incidence and remission of overweight among mostly low income, African-American middle school students. This community-based initiative seeks to change the school environment by supporting healthy eating, increasing physical activity, and decreasing the prevalence of overweight and diet-related diseases in children.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Most of CDC's and the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) programs are disease-specific. Yet, many research needs are similar across diseases and conditions. For example, poor living conditions can lead to violence among youth, learning problems in children who come to school hungry, and drug and alcohol abuse. In addition to supporting research grants to deal with such cross-cutting issues, the program is also creating opportunities for broad-based dialogue, so that results of importance to more than one health condition are shared among all who might benefit from them.

For more information on this or other CDC programs, visit www.cdc.gov/programs

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